new vocabulary, students have the opportunity to use language in a non-stressful way. While playing games, the learner's attention is on the message, not on the language. Rather than paying attention to the correctness of linguistic forms, most participants will do all they can to win. This eases the fear of negative evolution, the concern of being negatively judged in public which is one of the main factors inhibiting language learners from using the target language in front of other people. In a game oriented context, anxiety is reduced and speech fluency is generated thus communicative competence is achieved.

Currently, teachers enjoy an opportunity to operate a number of both traditional and innovative teaching methods. The methods which are more congenial for the needs of students based on their knowledge of the language are always appreciable in all aspects. The present article addresses a few of many innovative methods which can be very helpful for the teachers in meeting the expectations of students at intermediate and graduate level.

References

1. Madhavaiah G. et al., IJSRR 2013, 2(3), 141-145.

2. Jonassen D. H., Peck K. L. and Wilson B. G. Learning With Technology: A Constructivist Perspective,New Jersey: Merrill/Prentice Hall. 1999; 03(01): 04-06.

PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

ALISA OMELCHENKO, Senior teacher
O.M.Beketov National University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv

Problem-based learning (PBL) is certainly not a new but effective teaching methodology. It is a term used within education for a range of pedagogic approaches that encourage students to learn through the structured exploration of a research problem. Problem-based learning is both a teaching method and an approach to the curriculum. It consists of carefully designed problems that challenge students to use problem solving techniques, self-directed learning strategies, team participation skills, and disciplinary knowledge.

Problem-based learning is different with traditional education system. In traditional education system, teachers tend to start by providing information, and then expect students to use the information to solve problems. In a problem-based approach to learning the problem comes first. Students both define the problem and gather information to explore it. Working in self-directed groups, students thus take an active and systematic approach to defining and exploring a research problem. Students learn how to learn and to think critically and creatively. PBL challenges students to reflect on how they think (meta-cognition) and how they learn as they define the problem; discuss and debate with peers; develop and refine hypotheses; conduct research; analyze, evaluate and synthesize information; and reflect on the problem-solving process. In the PBL framework the students are stimulated to search for knowledge in a systematic, scientific and realistic way, use modern technology,

take responsibility for their own learning, work individually and in a group, understand and apply their newly gained knowledge.

In problem-based learning teacher provides students with appropriate problems to work on, assists them in identifying and accessing the materials and equipment necessary to solve the problems, gives necessary feedback and support during the problem-solving process, and evaluates students' participation and products, with the goal of helping them develop their problem-solving as well as their language and literacy skills. The teacher's role in problem-based learning includes the following steps:

- pre-teach;
- introduce the problem and the language needed to work on it;
- group students and provide resources;
- observe and support;
- follow up and assess progress.

The following are some of the defining characteristics of problem-based learning:

1. Learning is driven by challenging, open-ended problems with no one "right" answer.
2. Problems are context specific.
3. Students work as self-directed, active investigators and problem-solvers in small collaborative groups.
4. A key problem is identified and a solution is agreed upon and implemented.
5. Teachers adopt the role as facilitators of learning, guiding the learning process and promoting an environment of inquiry [2].

Supporters of PBL believe that, as a strategy, it develops critical thinking and creative skills, improves problem-solving skills, increases motivation, helps students learn to transfer knowledge to new situations.

Kosel (2002) enumerates the following as some of the advantages of PBL approach in teaching English across the curriculum:

1. A real problem raises motivation, much more than a preselected sequence of information from a course book.
2. In the model, students can integrate their professional knowledge and their knowledge of English.
3. The model makes them better equipped with functional skills needed for their professional careers and thus makes them more competitive on the job market.
4. Individual and social learning are combined.
5. English is learnt while doing something else, which goes together with the slogan "Learn by Doing" [1].

A common criticism of PBL as student-centered learning is that students cannot really know what might be important for them to learn, especially in areas which they have no prior experience. Therefore teachers, as facilitators, must be careful to assess and account for the prior knowledge that students bring to the classroom.

Another criticism is that a teacher adopting a problem-based learning approach may not be able to cover as much material as a conventional lecture-based course. Problem-based learning can be very challenging to implement, as it requires a lot of planning and hard work for the teacher. It can be difficult at first for the teacher to "relinquish control" and become a facilitator, encouraging the students to ask the right questions rather than handing them solutions.

In spite of criticism problem-based learning is considered as a strategy which gives enough opportunity for the students to learn on their own. PBL challenges students to reflect on how they think (meta-cognition) and how they learn as they define the problem; discuss and debate with peers; develop and refine hypotheses; conduct research; analyze, evaluate and synthesize information; and reflect on the problem-solving process. In a problem-based learning class, students are engaged in language learning through organized and purposeful activities with authentic materials and collaborative learning models.

So problem-based learning is highly student-centered and it combines cognitive and metacognitive teaching and learning. It produces independent learners who can continue to learn on their own in life and in their chosen careers.

References

1. Kosel, B. (2002). Problem-Based Learning in Teaching English Across the Curriculum. IATEFL ESP SIG News Letter, Issue 21.

2. Rhem, J. (1998). Problem-based learning: An introduction. The National Teaching and Learning Forum, 8(1). Retrieved December 11, 2006, from http://www.ntlf.com/html/pi/9812/problem-based learning_1.htm

3. Smith, C., Harris, K., & Reder, S. (2005). Applying research findings to instruction for adult English language learners.

INCORPORATING ELEMENTS OF CRITICAL THINKING INTO EFL COURSES

SERGII PETRENKO, PhD (Linguistics)
Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

The verb *think* has a lot of synonyms, which justifies its importance in human communication, such as *conceive, conclude, consider, determine, deem, believe, guess, judge, reckon, regard, suppose, hold, brood, cogitate, deliberate, have in mind, meditate, mull over, ponder, muse, chew over, rack one's brains, weigh up* etc.

The scholars distinguish between several types of thinking: memorizing, understanding, creative and intuitive thinking, and critical thinking. Memorizing is the important cognitive operation. The computer, for example, has memory that is better than ours. However, its ability to memorize cannot be thinking. Understanding is a complicated cognitive operation. When we try to understand someone's ideas, we only perceive things that were created by another person. Creative and intuitive thinking comes spontaneously. Cognitive processes are left unconscious. For instance, the artist doesn't think about how to do every stroke at the picture. They do it intuitively.